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Attorney Docket No. 1785.1007

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:

Masahiro HAGIHARA et al.

Application No.: 10/784,158

Group Art Unit: 3722

Confirmation No.: 8286

Filed: February 24, 2004

Examiner: Dana Ross

For: APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATICALLY CHANGING A ROBOT TOOL TIP MEMBER

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed October 19, 2005, applicants elect Figs. 2A and 2B identified in the Office Action as Species I, with traverse. Claims 1-3 are supported by Figs. 2A and 2B. Since claim 1 was identified as generic, at least claims 1-3 should be examined.

Furthermore, Figs. 4, 5A, 5B, 6A and 6B relate to the same embodiment as Figs. 2A and 2B and Figs. 7, 8, 9A and 9B also relate to this embodiment. As stated on page 7 of the application, "Figs. 2A and 2B are diagrams for illustrating demounting and mounting processes, respectively, of a tool tip member;" while "Fig. 4 is a top view showing a substantial part of a rotating member and tip member holding means ... used in the apparatus for automatically changing a tool tip member to perform the demounting and mounting processes shown in Figs. 2A and 2B" and thus, are not illustrations of separate species, but separate views of the same species.

Nozzle cleaning means 46 and four tip member holding means are illustrated in Fig. 4, two designated by reference numeral 43 and two designated by reference numeral 44. Figs. 5A and 5B show tip member holding means 43, while Figs. 6A and 6B show tip member holding means 44. Thus, these are not separate species, but rather details of separate parts of the apparatus. Figs. 7 and 8 show embodiments of nozzle cleaning means 46, while Fig. 9A shows the demounting of the tool tip member from the tip member holding means shown in Fig. 5A and

Fig. 9B shows the mounting of the tool tip member in the tip member holding means shown in Fig. 6A. Thus, these are not separate species of the invention, but alternative embodiments of portions of the apparatus embodying the invention.

Moreover, while claims 2-4 all depend from claim 1, they do not recite alternative embodiments. Claim 2 is directed to features of the controller, claim 3 is directed to features of the rotating member and claim 4 is directed to features of the tip member holding means. The remaining claims all depend from claim 4 and thus are directed to the same species as claim 4.

In other words, it is submitted that it is improper to issue a restriction requirement for the claims filed with the application. Claim 1 is not a generic claim; it is the only independent claim. There is a difference between claims being dependent and being directed to separate species. If the Restriction Requirement is maintained, the Examiner is respectfully requested to identify the claims corresponding to each species, so that the Restriction Requirement can be petitioned with more information than was provided in the October 19, 2005 Office Action.

Withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of all of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 11/21/05

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